We claim:

1. A system for maintaining, accessing and executing legacy computer software programs stored in a central location comprising:

a database for storing multiple software programs, some of said software programs being chronological versions of a particular software program developed and revised over a period of time, each said version being stored as a separate software program;

a computing device connected to said database capable of interacting with said database for the purpose of retrieving and executing software programs stored in said database;

a interface device connected to computing device for interacting with said computing device; and

a computing network for connecting said interface device and said computing device.

2. The system as described in claim 1 further comprising in said database, multiple versions of software programs, each version of a said software program being capable of executing in a particular computing environment.

3. The system as described in claim 2 wherein said software programs are stored in software directories according to the type of software program.

4. The system as described in claim 3 wherein said software directories include directories for operating system programs, application programs and utility programs.

5. The system as described in claim 2 further comprising links that connect set of previously identified software programs such that the connected software programs can be accessed sequentially.

6. The system as described in claim 1 wherein said interface device is a computer terminal.

7. The system as described in claim 1 wherein said computing device is a server.

8. The system as described in claim 7 wherein said server device comprises:

a central processing unit;

a memory;

emulator and simulator programs capable of creating particular computing environments; and

software retrieval programs for accessing and retrieving software stored in said database.

9. The system as described in claim 1 further comprising multiple interface devices capable of interacting with said server simultaneously.

10. A method for maintaining, accessing and executing legacy computer software programs stored in a central location comprising:

accessing a database that stores multiple types and multiple versions of software programs, some of said software versions being chronological sequences of a particular software program developed and revised over a period of time each program capable of executing in a computing environment;

submitting a software program request to a database controller;

retrieving the software program identified in the software program request;

determining whether to execute the retrieved software program; and

executing the retrieved software program.

11. The method as described in claim 10 further comprising and said retrieving step, the step of analyzing the different features and capabilities of the retrieved software program.

12. The method as described in claim 10 further comprising before said accessing step, the step of creating a database containing multiple types and multiple versions of software programs.

13. The method as described in claim 12 wherein said database creating step comprises:

creating a directory for each software program type:

placing each software program in the appropriate directory; and

assigning an identifier to each program.

14. The method as described in claim 13 further comprising the steps of:

creating specific collections of software programs by linking selected software programs together, said collection of programs becoming a software set.

15. The method as described in claim 10 further comprising after said accessing step, the steps of:

retrieving a software programs index, said index containing directories of each type software in the database and a list of each software program in each directory; and

identifying a specific software program in a software directory.

16. A method for accessing and executing software computer programs stored in a central database location, some of said software versions being chronological sequences of a particular software program developed and revised over a period of time, said method comprising the steps of:

accessing the database storing multiple types and versions of software programs;

retrieving from a controller connected to the database a software programs options list and a index of software types and software program versions;

submitting a request to the software controller containing a selected software programs option and an identified software program version;

retrieving from the database and identified software programs version; and

implementing the selected software option on the identified and retrieved software program.

17. The method as described in claim 16 wherein said implementation step comprises determining whether said selected program option is possible to implement and sending a decline message to the location to the submission when a selected option is not possible to implement on the identified and retrieved software program.

18. The method as described in claim 16 wherein said implementation step comprises creating a computing environment for executing the identified and selected software program.

19. The method as described in claim 18 wherein said computer environment creating step comprises determining the computer hardware and software necessary to implement the selected option on the retrieved software program.

20. The method as described in claim 19 wherein said implementation step occurs in the database controller.

21. The method as described in claim 19 wherein said implementation step occurs in a computing environment located at the software program request submission location.

22. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for accessing and executing software computer programs stored in a central database location comprising:

instructions for accessing the database storing multiple types and versions of software programs;

instructions for retrieving from a controller connected to the database a software programs options list and a index of software types and software program versions;

instructions for submitting a request to the software controller containing a selected software programs option and an identified software program version;

instructions for retrieving from the database and identified software programs version; and

instructions for implementing the selected software option on the identified and retrieved software program.

23. The computer program product as described in claim 22 wherein said implementation instruction further comprises:

instructions for determining whether said selected program option is possible to implement and;

instructions for sending a decline message to the location to the submission when a selected option is not possible to implement on the identified and retrieved software program.

24. The computer program product as described in claim 22 wherein said implementation instruction further comprises instructions for creating a computing environment for executing the identified and selected software program.

25. The computer program product as described in claim 24 wherein said computer environment creating instruction further comprises instructions for determining the computer hardware and software necessary to implement the selected option on the retrieved software program.

26. The computer program product as described in claim 25 wherein said implementation instructions occur in the database controller.

27. The computer program product as described in claim 25 wherein said implementation instructions occur in a computing environment located at the software program request submission location.

28. A computer connectable to a distributed computing environment and including a mechanism storing computer software programs, mechanisms for accessing and executing the stored computer software programs and mechanisms for transmitting and receiving messages over a computer network, said computer comprising:

a database of stored computer software programs, said programs comprising a collection of programs spanning a chronological range from the 1950's to the present, each said program capable of being executed in said computer;

a central processor;

a set of operating system programs to enable the execution of programs stored in said database; and

a set of emulation and simulation programs for use in the execution of programs stored in said database.